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THE NEGRO IN BUSINESS.

Can he Succeed as a Business Man—A Successful Chicagoan Tells the Story of the Race as a Factor in Business and Incidentally the Experiences of Twenty five Years of Activity.

There has been so much controversy concerning the Negro, so much said and written about his alleged inferiority, such an attempt made to establish relationship between him and the monkey, that even in this new century there exists, in some quarters, grave doubts as to his origin, and a general misapprehension as to his nature, capabilities, and purposes. But research into the primeval history of man evinces the fact, beyond the possibility of skepticism, that mankind had only one common origin. We are taught that in the beginning God created man in His own image, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul. The closest and most thorough analysis of the blood of different races fails to detect the slightest difference in the color, size, shape, or quality of its corpuscles. The fact that one people are white, another yellow, another red, another brown, and yet another black has its cause in the working of a law of nature which we do not fully understand. Sacred history plainly teaches that the Negro is a man like other men and that of one blood God created all nations; hence there can be no racial barrier to a successful business career, in the general constitution of a black man.

What was the business of the Negro in the land of his nativity, or at the time of his emancipation in this country, does not so much interest us now, except as it may help us to appreciate his capacity for business at present.

Life for our forefathers in Africa was very plain and very simple. The multitude was engaged with problems little more difficult than the acquirement of food and drink and rest, raiment not being a necessity; hence their only business, aside from frequent wars with kindred tribes, was to explore a way to the fruit tree, the water brook, and the shade, and so their years were principally filled up with the business of merely satisfying those three physical wants—hunger, thirst, and rest.

When human slavery was established in the colonies, those of our race, either fortunate or unfortunate enough to be brought to these shores were instructed mainly in the care of cotton, tobacco, and rice crops; and from these few Southern industries we could not turn aside. Slavery deprived the Negro of the little responsibility devolving upon him in his savage state—that of providing food and drink and finding rest. No responsibility was allowed to devolve upon him, other than to perform allotted work, not even the selection of his wife; and when children were born to him, he was not confronted with the problem of how he should provide food and shelter for them, nor wherewith they should be



MR. THEODORE W. JONES.
Chicago's Leading Afro American Business Man.

clothed. He and his issue being the property of his master, like swine or cattle, their issue were alike stalled and fed by the owner. With but few exceptions, this was the condition of the Negro when the proclamation of emancipation was issued, thirty-eight years ago.

From that eventful day onward, the mighty aspiration of the ex-slave for education and material development has written a new page in the history of the world's progress. Let us now examine the record made, and call to our assistance the statistics of the Government that we may truthfully answer the question, Can the Negro succeed as a business man? We are indebted to ex-Congressman George H. White for the information that since the dawn of our freedom the race has reduced its illiteracy at least 45 per cent; that we have written and published nearly 500 books; have edited

fully 300 newspapers; have 2,000 lawyers at the bar, a corresponding number of practicing physicians, and 32,000 school teachers. We own 140,000 homes and have real and personal property valued at \$920,000,000. The Census of 1890 shows that 20,020 persons of African descent were engaged in business, and there were more than 17,000 barbers not included in those figures; and be it remembered that this showing was made more than ten years ago.

It is true that we have produced no skilled master mechanics or great speculators; no commercial princes or merchant kings. These are beyond our immediate reach and reserved for later growth. But we have today, on the floor of this convention, colored men who represent nearly every business enumerated in the census reports—

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INVADING THE NEW SOUTH.

Dr. Arnold a Howard Graduate Hangs out His Shingle in Charlotte and Awaits the Course of Events—Editor Smith Writes of the Duties of the Professional men of the Race.

Charlotte, N. C.—(Special.)—Dr. O. H. Arnold, of Washington, D. C., and a graduate of Howard University, came to our city last week to practice his profession—dentistry. He successfully passed a most rigid examination and was highly complimented by the examiner for his comprehensive and thorough treatment of all the subjects in which he was examined.

The doctor is established on the leading business street of Charlotte. We paid him a visit and found his office furnished with a handsome and the latest improved "Harvard" dental chair, a fine dental engine, and a beautiful oak cabinet supplied with instruments of every description employed in his profession. The reception room showed in all of its appointments taste and artistic ability. In fact, the doctor is thoroughly equipped in every respect for practice.

Dr. Arnold is cordially welcomed by the professional and business men of Charlotte and its best citizens. He fills a long-felt want in our community. We are now enabled to have the services of a skilled practitioner of our own race. And in place of the dingy back office and rickety chair of the prejudiced white dentist, we can now enter an office equal to any in the city and receive skillful treatment and courtesy, and not have our manhood degraded.

Dr. Arnold is a pioneer in his profession, and Charlotte feels proud that it can boast of the first and only Negro dentist in the great State of North Carolina.

Every year there are a large number of brilliant and accomplished young men of the race graduating from scientific and professional schools, who are afraid to venture away from the large cities.

The social and intellectual facilities which the large Northern cities afford, particularly the social side, have influenced the greater number of our professional men to remain in those cities. In most of our large cities—the professions are already overcrowded and the young man who so settles himself is only enabled to eke out a mere existence. Come South, young men! It is the place for the black man to rise. Do not make the mistake of segregating in one or two places, but, like Dr. Arnold, have the push and pluck to venture forth and be a pioneer. There are a number of excellent fields all over the Southland ready and waiting for Negro doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, and dentists. Wilmington, Raleigh, Asheville, New Berne, Durham, and Winston are thriving and populous cities, which stand in crying need of the services of a first-class Negro dentist. Any young man going to either of these cities will be assured of immediate success.

J. W. SMITH,
Editor Star of Zion.
Charlotte, N. C.